AT THE CROSSROADS

The revolt in Moscow had been crushed. The government had won the battle. Had it also won the war against the people's discontent?

The Manifesto of October 17 remained in force. Stout defenders of the throne called themselves the party of October 17—the Octobrists. Moderate liberals stood for a constitutional monarchy. Would the establishment of a constitutional monarchy and fulfillment of the promises of the Manifesto amount to at least a partial victory of the revolution?

Russia stood at the crossroads. To realize the promises extorted from the Tsar by the revolution would establish a democratic regime from the border of Germany to the Pacific. To repeal the Manifesto would leave the struggle between the government and the people unsolved.

The fate of Russia remained in suspense until the end of 1907, when, after the dissolution of two Dumas, the political regime in Russia was stabilized as a compromise between absolutism and pseudo-constitutionalism. Under this regime Russia fell prey to the infamy of Rasputin, the ordeal of war, the tragedy of a new revolution, and ultimately the new despotism.

THE FIRST ELECTION CAMPAIGN

I was released from prison at the end of January, 1906, and went the next day to register for the new semester at the University. It had returned to the routine of academic life. I was somewhat embarrassed by questions about my health and my plans for the future. I was in perfect physical condition, as rested as after a long stay in a sanatorium, and I had no plans. My companions, however, expected me to resume activities with the Students' Council, the Union of Commercial Employees, and the party. The Students' Council was preoccupied with the organization of a co-operative canteen. The Union of Commercial Employees reminded me of my promise to help them with their cultural magazine. Within the party, the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks were fighting for power. None of these issues appealed to me.

The labor movement in St. Petersburg had suffered a terrible moral defeat in December when the workers could not block the sending